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Thanksgiving Day — The Harvest Festival

EVERY day ought to be for us l day of thanksgiving. There is neither l day nor a moment when we are not lessed by the goodnesses of God. It vas right in the middle of his lamentaions concerning his affliction and misry that Jeremiah said: "This I recall to nind; therefore have I hope. It is of he Lord's lovingkindnesses that we are ot consumed, because his compassions ail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." Every soul as cause to make such a confession, so hat every day brings new reasons for he giving of thanks.

Every day is a day for thanksgiving. But throughout the year there is only one Thanksgiving Day. It falls, according to established custom, on the last Thursday in November, and will this year be observed on November the 24th.

It is not enough to say that it is a day set aside for the *special giving* of thanks. It might, indeed, be good for us on occasion to bestir our sluggish spirits to give extraordinary thought and effort to a thanksgiving exercise. But we ought frequently to so bestir our spirits and not only once in the year. Nor is it enough to say only that thanksgiving Day is a day of thanks for *special blessings*. It is true that in this season we have particular cause to thank God for the harvest. But there are many other occasions which give particular causes for thanksgiving.

The unique thing about Thanksgiving Day is that it is a day of festive celebration which has become a fixed part of our national tradition and practice. It is a national holiday associated with the gathering in of the harvest. It is our American Harvest Festival, — a pageant of color and gaiety and full feasting. But it is no simply natural, much less a pagan celebration. It is a Christian festival — based on the recognition of the goodness of God, the Giver of the Harvest, and celebrated in the spirit of thanksgiving to Him for His mercies.

* * *

THERE WAS, indeed, a strongly festival character to the first "Thanksgiving" observed by the Puritans in America. The gathering of the first harvest at Plymouth in 1621 was celebrated by a week of joyous festivity. One narrative gives the following account: "Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling . . . they four in one day killed as much fowl, as with a little help beside, served the Company almost a week, at which time amongst other Recreations, we exercised our Arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest King Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five Deer, which they brought to the Plantation, and bestowed on our Governor, and upon the Captain, and others. And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty."

From this it would appear that the Puritans were not quite as dour a folk as they are often suspected of being. There is no mistaking their love of the feast, their fondness for the games of recreation, and their readiness to mix socially with the neighboring Indians. It would seem, too, that our fulsome tables of feasting fowl, and our indulgence in a bit of touch foot-ball or bowling (while the ladies exercise themselves at the dishpan), are not out of keeping with the pattern of the first Puritan "Thanksgiving."

IN THIS ISSUE

Thanksgiving Day — The Harvest Festival *George Stob* 1
O Cross That Liftest Up My Head ..... *Harry R. Boer* 3
Problems and Opportunities in Canada .. *John H. Kromminga* 4
Christian Education — The Present .... *W. T. Radius* 8
The Christian and the Boy Scouts of America ..... *M. Eugene Osterhaven* 10
Need for a University: What Is It We Need? ..... *W. Harry Jellema* 13
Letters to the *Journal* 15

Thanksgiving Day – Harvest Festival — Continued

It is not to be supposed, however, that the first Puritan "Thanksgiving" was the beginning of our annual Thanksgiving Day. It was the custom of the New England fathers to appoint several days of feasting or thanksgiving throughout the year for specific causes. In 1623 the Plymouth colony was threatened with crop failure, but after a day of feasting and prayer was appointed and observed, the rains came. This prompted a day of thanksgiving following. One of the company wrote: "Having these many signs of God's favor and acceptation, we thought it would be great ingratitude, if secretly we should smother up the same, or content ourselves with private thanksgiving for that which by private prayer could not be obtained. And therefore another solemn day was set apart and appointed for that end; wherein we returned glory, honor, and praise, with all thankfulness to our good God, which dealt so graciously with us."

Thanksgiving Day in celebration of the harvest was not observed annually in the colonies until the time beginning with the middle of the 17th century. After the achievement of American independence, President Washington appointed a day of thanksgiving for Thursday, November 26, in 1789, and another such day in 1795. In many of the States an annual Thanksgiving Day was observed from about 1825, although in some Southern States there was opposition to the observance of such a day on the ground that it was a relic of Puritanic bigotry. President Lincoln appointed the fourth Thursday of November 1864 as a day of thanksgiving, and since that time each president has annually followed his example (President F. D. Roosevelt, however, having broken the tradition in part by appointing the third Thursday in order to lengthen the period for Christmas shoping).

* * *

THANKSGIVING DAY has become firmly established in the life of the American people. The center of its observance is still the harvest festival, and its symbols the horn of plenty, the golden pumpkin, and the plump turkey. It is a happy time, as harvest time — when labors are done and the fruits are gathered — must always be. It is the leisured time, which gives occasion for family gatherings around the festive board. And, because all good gifts come from the Lord of the Harvest, it is a day which, amid all the feasting and gaiety must be filled with the spirit of glad devotion and humble thanks to the God of goodness.

Let it be a day of glad feasting, our Thanksgiving Day, and one in which no one within the reach of our charity shall suffer want because of poverty or distress. Let the heart and the body leap for pleasure, even as the valleys, covered over with grain, shout for joy and also sing. But in our feasting and in our pleasure for all that goodness, let us remember with joyous thanksgiving the Lord from whose great store we are thus provided.

George Stob

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O Cross That Liftest Up My Head

by HARRY R. BOER

ONE Saturday afternoon last August I placed in the shade of a tree three or four crates of books and miscellaneous papers that a friend had stored away for me, and started sorting. A missionary about to leave the country or his post abroad has to go through chores like these. What do you take along? What stays at home? What can be thrown away? As I delved into the books and papers, however, these questions soon became irrelevant. There was that High School annual of 1928 when I was a freshman at Holland Christian. I had not looked at it for years. Was I that bushy-headed kid? There were other memories: college, seminary, chaplaincy, letters I had sent home from the Pacific and which my parents had kept for me, and their letters to me, pictures of black and white friends on the mission field, and good books long not read. But all of this receded into the background, at least for the moment, when I came to an old manila envelope on which was written a name. The name was Tony Cloninger. In it was a copy of a letter Tony had written home May 29, 1944. It had been written abroad one of the ships that was taking the Second Marine Division from Hawaii to Saipan. I should like to tell you what I know about Tony, the circumstances under which I received the letter, and then let you read it.

* * *

IN FEBRUARY, 1944, I was transferred from the Tenth Marine Artillery to the Eight Marine Infantry Regiment. I organized a Bible class in my new assignment, and among the men who attended it was a hospital corpsman of the Second Battalion named Tony Cloninger. A boy he was, just out of High School, if he had gone that far. His face was utterly open with the naivete and simplicity of complete innocence. He was as uncommunicative as he was open-faced. I can still see him sitting there on my bunk as we met in my 16 by 16 pyramidal tent. Slender of build, with a crew cut and long oval face, Tony took in everything and said nothing. But I distinctly remember that as I stood at the tent door to shake hands with the men at the close of the session Tony took my hand very warmly and in a manner that was more than perfunctory said, "Thank you, chaplain."

June 15 was D-day on Saipan. Just when it happened I no longer recall, but at some time between the 15th and the 19th Tony was killed in action. I heard the news with that dullness with which in combat you hear about deaths of friends and acquaintances. Bill Spatz, a Pfc. and as gentle a Christian and devoted Marine as ever entered the Corps, had been killed. So had the Executive Officer of the Tenth Marines with whom I had played chess aboard ship, and the captain of one of our companies who was always sympathetic to my work, and that dark-haired chap of Italian descent whose lifeless form we found after that wild night of D-day plus one with a crucifix clenched tight in his closed fist, and so many others whom I knew and did not know. It was not possible to absorb it all. And so, when I heard about Tony I was sorry and sad and went on with the task at hand.

Saipan was secured on the 9th of July and on the 24th we attacked Tinian Island. When that job had been done we did occupation duty for awhile on that island and then returned to Saipan.

One morning in November or December, 1944, I was sitting in my tent when the telephone rang. It was the Sergeant Major of the Second Battalion.

"Chaplain," he said, "we're sorting out the personal effects of the men killed in action, and we have come across a letter which we think you ought to handle. I'm sending a messenger over with it."

"O.K., Sarge, thanks for the trouble."

I REMEMBER having a peculiar sensation as I hung up the receiver. I knew by some intuition which eluded analysis that this letter had been written by Tony Cloninger. It was no surprise to me, except it be the surprise of seeing my surmise correct, to receive shortly from the hands of the messenger a letter that had been found in Tony's knapsack.

It was a letter that had not been finished. At least, it bears no concluding salutation and signature. Perhaps he intended to finish it sometime and never found a restful opportunity. This would seem to be indicated by the two scraps of paper with their hastily scrawled notes which were found with it in the knapsack. Although the letter is addressed to his family and friends, its publication has his express permission. This is the letter:

Dear Dad, Louise, Dan, Nora, Ida, Dave, Alpha and all my friends and loved ones:

I am hoping now as I write this letter that it will not be necessary for it to be mailed to you. I am writing this as my last letter only in case that it is God's will that I cannot see you again here on earth. I hope it is his will that I can come back to see you and tell you and many others what I am writing in this letter. I am trusting whoever finds this letter will give it to a chaplain or to some one who can mail it to you.

I am not writing this letter in sorrow. but with much joy, that if this is my last letter to you it may help you and others and give you happiness to know that I am with God and he with me through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who with his word of truth and his mercy made me clean and whole. So be of good faith and we will meet again up in heaven for eternal life.

I would like for this humble letter to help some lost soul to believe as I believe and to help others believe in the great truth of our God through the example and word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Let me tell you my dear friends, he is everywhere. Out here in this wide Pacific he is with me now even as I write this letter and I am persuaded he will be with me unto death, however short or long that will be. I am not afraid to die. This world can kill our bodies but it cannot kill our souls if we give them to Jesus.

So be not sorrowful or unhappy, my Dad and loved ones, that you will not see me here on earth again. Go to church often no matter what. Treat your neighbors as you would yourself,

O Cross that Liftest Up My Head — Continued

worry not over troubles, give abundantly to the church, forgive fully your neighbors' trespasses, and he will forgive you just as fully yours against him. For we have all sinned beyond doubt; confess fully that you have. Live not for yourself but for God and his service. Be sure to go to church often.

My Dear Dan and Nora, I hope that you have become stronger in faith and in the truth. Forget these worldly troubles that you have. Do not let money or the lack of it worry you. You know that it is a root of evil. Give what you have more plentifully and you will be rich. Do not talk of your troubles but more of the glory of God. Jesus is the great healer. He will take those from you if you give your whole self to him, not just your troubles.

My Dear Dave and Ida, I would like very much to hear you pray again. I remember them in my heart yet. Keep on fighting the good fight of faith. Get all the folks to go to church often. Dave, hold prayer meeting at home with my folks. Help them all you can. Pray for this sinful world. I hope it is God's will that I can come home and be a minister. May we meet in heaven eternal.

My Dear Alpha, your letter was not in vain. I thank you and God, who through Jesus gave you faith and courage in the truth of his will, that you could pass it on to others. So keep in strong faith, Alpha. May God make you even stronger in his truth and word as you grow in age. Through Jesus we pray.

I would like to have seen you all again, but if you get this letter it was his will that it should be this way.

HERE the letter ends. Included in the battered envelope in which the above was found were two notes written on scraps of paper, and twenty-five dollars. One note read:

Chaplain: Take this money and use it for God's work, wherever you think it is needed. I only wish I had more to give for the work of his Kingdom.

The other:

Chaplain: Will you please mail this letter to my father? (Read it if you will to the world, it is not personal).

* * *

I had photostatic copies made of the letter at Division Headquarters, two of which I sent to Tony's father with the original. One I have in my own file.

In the complete tranquility and almost apostolic solicitude for others with which Tony Cloninger in his loneliness faced the last enemy, the power of the Cross speaks with undeniable eloquence. I think of those words of George Matheson:

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

Problems and Opportunities in Canada

by JOHN H. KROMMINGA

THE Christian Reformed Church is becoming increasingly aware of the significance of her Canadian branch. Statistics plainly show that we are much more an international church than we were ten years ago. Canada certainly is important to the Christian Reformed Church.

But there is another interesting aspect to this situation which we often fail to assess as we should. The Christian Reformed Church is also important to Canada. The startling fact is that the members of the Christian Reformed Church a greater percentage of the Canadian population at this very date than they do in the United States. If growth continues for any length of time at or near the present rate, the Christian Reformed Church will loom even larger in Canadian life than she does now, and far larger there than in the United States.

According to the 1955 *Yearbook*, we have 7,202 families in Canada and 37,790 in the United States for a total of 44,992. We have 16,548 confessing members in Canada and 89,399 in the United States for a total of 105,947. We have 37,217 souls in Canada and 159,605 in the United States, for a total of 196,822. In the Christian Reformed Church, therefore, one out of six families is Canadian; one out of six communicants; and one out of five souls.

But even more significant than this, only about one out of every 1033 United States citizens is a member of our church; but in Canada, one out of 403 is Christian Reformed. This means that even today, the members of the Christian Reformed Church constitute more than twice as big a percentage of the population in Canada as in the United States. All other things being equal, the opportunity to be an influence seems greater at present in Canada than in the United States.

Whatever problems we face in Canada are therefore problems of great significance, to be seriously faced. What could be more obvious than that these churches and people cannot be treated as orphans or step-children? This is true entirely apart from any considerations of the investment in money and men that we have in that area. The churches and people in Canada have their own peculiar problems and opportunities. If ignored, these can build up tension. Some adjustments will be necessary between the two branches of the church.

THERE ARE, as I see it, two classes of problems facing us in Canada. The one class of problems arises out of the different customs and mores brought over from the Netherlands. The description of these we can best leave to those who minister and live among the Canadians. They have given us some glimpses of these customs in the past, and it is to be hoped that they will continue to do so. Let us only say that these differences sometimes constitute real points of friction. Both the immigrants and the well-established Americans ought to be on their guard against any lack of patience with each other in dealing with them.

But it would seem logical to expect that these differences would decline in significance with the passage of time. Actually, the new Canadians are in the advantageous position of being able to learn from our mistakes. They should make more progress in Canadianizing than we did in Americanizing, and in some respects, for example in language, they are showing signs of doing just that. Large though these differences may loom at the moment, any differences based upon a past relationship may be expected to become less, not greater, as that relationship slips farther and farther into the past.

THE SECOND class of problems is potentially far more important than the first. It may be expected to increase in its significance as the new Canadians become less new and more Canadian. It arises out of the differences between Canada and the United States as nations. Both Canada's national heritage and her present existence are quite independent of the United States, a fact which we tend to lose sight of. Even the fact that her history and present life are closely bound to the United States tends to make Canadians more conscious, not less so, of the differences, lest they lose their independent existence by being considered part of the United States.

These differences, I say, will become greater, not less, as the years fly by. The immigrant who begins to find his bearings on this side of the ocean discovers that the two countries are two indeed, not one. The more completely he is Canadianized, the more clearly he will realize this distinction. The more loyal a Canadian he becomes, the more jealous he will be of his own country's honor. And surely we would not want it to be otherwise. The conflicting claims of old world and new are perplexing enough, without adding confusion within the bounds of the new.

It is with these problems of the second class, constituting, as we believe they do, the major part of the problem, that we wish to concern ourselves. We shall do this first with respect to non-ecclesiastical differences between Canada and the United States, and then with the differences between the two countries as to their ecclesiastical history.

* * *

WHAT KIND of a neighbor is our neighbor to the north? Through what formative experiences has she passed, and what problems has she faced in her history? Her problems have usually been akin to ours, but they have seldom, if ever, been precisely the same. The major domestic problem which she has faced has been the amalgamation of two great cultural and religious blocs; the French Catholic and the English Protestant. The existence of these two great groups, and their significance for the laws of the land, for religion, and for politics, have constituted Canada's most persistent internal problem.

But there is another, and perhaps even more important respect in which Canada has a dual point of reference. Her relations to the United States on the one hand and to the British Empire on the other have constituted her major foreign problem. Canada has strong ties with each of these two great world powers. You might say the one set of ties exists by heredity and the other by environment. At the time of the American Declaration of Independence, the pendulum of Canadian sympathies swung over in the direction of Great Britain. Since that time it has oscillated throughout the years. It now seems closer to the United States than perhaps ever before. It is especially against that background that we wish to note a few points of difference between Canada and the United States.

One potential source of difficulty which has aroused less trouble than might have been expected is the existence of a long boundary line which is largely artificial. Only along the area of the Great Lakes is there much real geographical reason for a boundary line between the two countries. And yet, in pleasing contrast to most European countries, border disputes between the United States and Canada have been few in number, very little blood has been shed in them, and every one has been amicably settled.

Canada has frequently found itself in a more uncomfortable position with respect to trade problems. Repeatedly she has been between the upper and nether millstones because of her connections with both Great Britian and the United States. More often than not, when Canada was seeking free trade, either the United States or Great Britain (and often both) were advocating high tariffs. The fishing and commercial and industrial interests of the two neighbor countries have often clashed. On one occasion, for instance, when Canada was laboring to populate her West through immigration, her citizens were dismayed to learn that the most skilled among her immigrants were flocking southward across the border to the United States, where opportunities seemed to beckon more alluringly.

But perhaps the most symbolic and significant point of difficulty is the repeated expression of the American attitude that Canada is something of an appendage of the United States, or can easily be made to be so. The persistence of this attitude is seen in the repeated attempts to annex Canada to the United States. At the time of the American Revolution many American patriots proposed to make Canada a fourteenth state. But the propaganda put forth to this end was not effective, and Canadian loyalties remained with the British cause. During the War of 1812, several military expeditions set out to conquer Canada. But Canada brilliantly resisted the attacks, and emerged as the only one of the three nations involved in the war to gain a clearcut victory. Again at the time of the American Civil War, several voices (among them, Gladstone's) proposed that Canada should be added to the United States to make up for those Southern states whose loss to the Union seemed imminent. But if it was dreamed that this was to be accomplished by persuasion, the dream was certainly farfetched; for after the war broke out, Canada, with Great Britian, actually sympathized with the cause of the Southern states. All of this serves to support and illustrate the contention that Canada has jealously and successfully maintained her independence from the United States.

One may expect, with this background that loyal Canadians shall look with disfavor on a sizeable denomination which is nothing more than a relatively voiceless branch of a denomination across her borders. We may well expect her to demand of those who are welcomed to her shores that they expend their energies in becoming Canadians, not some sort of hyphenated bybrids who are neither European nor Canadian nor American.

And since the Church often follows, to some extent, the organizational forms of her environment, it is significant also to note a few points of difference between Canada and the United States in government. There are two main points of difference. Canada follows, in general, the English parliamentary plan, and has the so-called

"responsible government" which can be overthrown by a contrary vote anywhere between the regular election periods. And in the division of powers between the central and local governments, the principle of division is the exact opposite from that in the United States. In the United States, the Federal government's powers are prescribed and circumscribed, and the residual powers are left to the states. But in Canada, the provincial powers are prescribed and defined, and the great residual powers belong to the central, or Dominion, government.

Looking over the situation in general, we may note that the United States claims a material superiority over Canada. There is little question that this is, to date, generally true, and the Canadians themselves are conscious of the fact and sensitive on that score. But Canadian enthusiasts claim, on the other hand, a moral superiority for their country. Without making a final judgment on that question, we can certainly agree that Canada is a country well-governed, well-policed, and well educated. She has been more successful in her solutions to some major problems than has the United States. Her Indian problem, for example, was settled with far less bloodshed and trouble than was that of the United States. Canada has been slower in growth, in westward expansion, and in unification. But in some respects this very slowness has proved to be an advantage.

Canada now has equal status in the British Commonwealth, which amounts to practical independence. The ties with Britain are now almost wholly ties of sentiment and the consciousness of a common heritage. In this gradually-acquired freedom, Canada is tending to line up with the United States on many questions. But she desires to continue to do so as an equal, not as living in the shadow of the United States.

* * *

ILLUMINATING though these general considerations may be for our subject, the investigation of the ecclesiastical history of Canada is even more significant for us. Thus far we have been asking, "In what general atmosphere will our Canadian brethren live and work as people?" But now we ask, "Under what conditions will they labor together as a Church?" We propose to look at this problem under five subordinate considerations.

(1) *The influence of the frontier.* This is admittedly a dominant factor in shaping the peculiar religious situation in the United States. Some students probably exaggerate the importance of this factor, but all agree that it was very significant in forming the American character — religiously as well as otherwise.

It should then be remarked first of all that Canada also experienced the challenges, problems, and stimuli of the frontier. This also holds true of other formative challenges which were met in the United States, such as industrialization and immigration. But then we must hasten to make this observation, which for purposes of comparison is most significant, that the frontier was much less of an influence in Canada than in the United States.

Back of this broad statement lie three elements of difference between the Canadian and the American contact with the frontier. We can afford each only a brief mention. The frontier in Canada was of a different sort; there was nothing in Canada, for instance, which corresponded to the fertile Mississippi Valley. It was conquered later; civilization jumped this barrier by the late nineteenth century, when the frontier was almost disappearing in the United States. And the frontier was conquered more rapidly, once the conquest started, with the help of railroads and a chain of settlements.

The religious results of these differences are many, and we can but touch upon them. The camp meetings which were so common in the United States and placed such a definite stamp on American religion, were not fostered by the Canadian situation. The pioneer stage was more quickly passed, allowing for more success for the ordinary, or classic, church forms. And the highly emotional religions which proliferated in the United States did not become anywhere near as common in Canada. Perhaps even the lesser influence of the Social Gospel in Canada can be traced to this different frontier, since the Social Gospel seems to bear a lineal relation to American revivalism and activism.

(2) *Diversity of denominations.* No other nation in the world boasts — or bemoans — such a multitude of separate religious organizations as the United States. In Canada, this situation exists only on a far smaller scale. Many elements enter into the making of this difference. There was in Canada far less of a development of the radical left-wing denominations and less also of the purely indigenous religious groups, some of whom are only on the very fringes of Christianity. Fewer old-world divisions were transplanted to Canada. While other nations were represented in Canada, the French and English represented a much larger percentage of her population than they did in America. Continental Protestantism was much less represented in the northern nation.

The influence of the frontier on the two countries was the same in this respect, that it aroused an impatience with the divisions of the Church. But in the United States this often had the result of producing brand-new denominations, while in Canada the characteristic effect was to produce a tendency toward union and cooperation. In Canada there were no new denominations of large size — as the Disciples, for instance, in the United States — and the older groups tended to unite. Some of the implications of this picture for the potential Canadian attitude toward our church would seem to be obvious. They will bear careful investigation.

(3) *National and religious minorities.* French Catholicism is so large a minority as to stand in a class by itself. The French Catholics have grown to their present three million-plus from the 70,000 at the time of the British conquest of Canada, almost wholly by natural increase. This has made for a strong conservatism on the part of the Canadian Catholic Church, which was strengthened by the arrival of many fugitive priests at the time of the French Revolution. Religiously they are strongly ultramontanist, politically they are nationalist. Church and State have been somewhat united, particularly in Quebec. The presence of this strong group in Canada has also aroused some violent criticism, particularly among the Orangemen of Ontario.

A quick glance at other groups will illustrate the fact that denominations in Canada have tended to become strictly Canadian denominations. Presbyterians entered Canada mainly through

the United States, but early formed their own synods. Methodists also arrived by way of the United States, but swung over to sympathy with Great Britain, particularly during the War of 1812. Baptists also came from the United States, but are strongly independent in their organization. When German immigrants to Canada wrote to Henry Muhlenberg in the United States for advice, he told them to unite with the Anglican Church. Some American Lutherans have branches across the border, but they have their own synods. All of this certainly gives reason for careful reflection on the relation of the Canadian and American sectors of the Christian Reformed Church.

(4) *Church union.* This tendency has a long, honorable, and distinctive career in Canada. Various Presbyterian bodies began early to seek united organization, which was completed by 1875. Canadian Methodists achieved union by 1884. But the most notable achievement is the United Church of Canada. The movement in this direction had its rise among the Methodists in 1902, and culminated in 1925 in the union of the Congregationalists, the Methodists, and a majority of the Presbyterians. Union enthusiasts point with gratification to this church, for never before in the history of Protestantism had bodies of such different beliefs and policies come together on so large a scale.

(5) *Religion in life.* Church activity has played a prominent role in Canada. In 1911, when only some 43% of Americans were church members, Canada boasted a church participation of 95% of her population. Partly as a reflection of this large-scale participation in religion, has partly by reason of the situation in Catholic Quebec, religion has been more clearly represented in the laws, the education, and the customs found in Canada than in the United States. In general it may be said, however, that a secularizing trend is noticeable in Canada as well as south of her borders.

* * *

REFLECTING upon the differences here noted, it would seem to be the height of folly to act as if the Christian Reformed Church were functioning in exactly the same atmosphere in Canada as in the United States. We have two governments, two cultures, on which we fix our eyes and to which we address our message. The very manner in which the Englissh language is used and pronounced is not the same on both sides of the border. Which Bible society should be supported? Which national holidays should be observed? What religious tendencies should be resisted, and how? What religious influences may be tolerated? It remains true in all this that the similarities probably outweigh the differences. But the differences are not to be ignored.

Perhaps it is in home mission outlook that the difference strikes us most directly. There is a wonderful opportunity beckoning the Canadian churches, in many respects a greater opportunity than we face in the United States. And yet there are difficulties also, for example, the spirit of church union and the large percentage of the population which is at least nominally Christian. In meeting these opportunities, the Canadian churches will have to convince their neighbors as soon as possible that they are no longer Dutch, but Canadian. We may not complicate this problem by emphasizing American domination over them.

Only the directions of a solution can be suggested here. The time is not ripe for a complete program of action. A clear understanding of the problem must precede any satisfactory treatment of it. My first suggestion, in fact, is that nothing hasty should be done. There is some urgency about the problem, but it has the urgency of a long-range problem rather than a demand for immediate action.

It would be a tragedy, of course, if the churches should separate. We must express, organizationally, our oneness in the faith. Even taken together, we are nothing more than a small minority. Unity is a necessity. I do not say that on the basis of the money and work the church has poured into Canada. Rather, I think that this effort itself is an expression of the deep conviction that we are one indeed and ought to demonstrate that unity.

But for the very purpose of preserving that unity, provision ought to be made for some flexibility within it. Separate synods might be desirable, although purely geographical reasons make this at best a somewhat remote ideal. But some provision ought soon to be made for some form of united action by the Canadian classes on matters of their common concern.

And in the meantime, a strong emphasis ought to be placed on our mutual understanding of those aspects of our denominational life which are not directly affected by national differences. The foreign mission enterprise, for instance, may well be a joint program, and the more fully the Canadian churches participate in it, the better it will be both for our churches and for the heathen whose eternal welfare we seek. The educational effort may well be a matter of cooperation, and to that end Calvin College and Seminary ought to bend their efforts to do whatever they can for the members from Canada.

The Christian Reformed Church in North America can look with eager expectation to continued growth and expanding influence in Canada. There is no need to be divided into two churches. But wisdom and careful attention ought to be directed to the task of remaining one with peace and profit. I call all my readers to that task, that their best efforts and affections may be united in the achieving of this worthy goal.

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Christian Education: The Present

by W. T. RADIUS

WHILE congratulating ourselves upon our accomplishments in Christian Education we had better not be too much at ease in this part of Zion. We face some real problems and with regard to some of these problems it is at present not at all clear what the solution must be. I shall pass by the growing financial burden of our schools. How great that load is can be quickly understood if you remind yourself, if that be necessary, that you must carry this in addition to maintaining along with your fellow Americans the expanding financial responsibilities of the public school system. And the present and future needs of the public schools are felt to be so burdensome that from one end of the country to another there are anguished appeals to Washington to ease the load with Federal aid. Are we in our Christian schools to go it alone, or are we moving inevitably toward participation in state aid to education? Either alternative makes us pause.

I am more hopeful about another of our chronic ailments, that of teacher shortage. If money matters are the special concern of the boards of control, the recruiting of teachers is a problem with which teachers themselves can best deal. This I take it, sounds not at all convincing to most of you. There leaps at once to your mind the thought that if we only had more money at our disposal and could pay better salaries we would lick the teacher shortage problem. That's a problem for boards to solve; teachers can't deal with it because they themselves are the victims of the very evil that accounts for the shortage. We tend to think that way because of our prevailing American habit of believing that there is a price-tag on everything and that if only you can put up the cash everything is for sale.

I would not want to be misunderstood on this point; let me not be thought to have taken leave completely from what little sense I have and to be understood as saying that salaries are unimportant. Dr. Samuel Johnson, the famous eighteenth century man of letters, was in the habit of saying that if a man doesn't think about the needs of his stomach he is not apt to be able to think about anything else. At Calvin, when we talk of the big bulge in enrollment that is coming upon us and the uncommon strain to which we are going to subject both equipment and personnel, we are apt to remark that there is nothing wrong with Calvin which five million dollars couldn't lick. Far be it from me to disparage the value of and the need for money in our schools. It will alleviate but it will not solve the present terrific shortage of teachers.

* * *

I INTIMATED that we as teachers can make a significant contribution to the very great need of recruiting young people for teaching in our Christian schools. It is time that I explain myself. I am not thinking of the challenge of full-time kingdom service, as the phrase goes, that parents and older people generally should set before the young. All of us who have in our charge the spiritual and the intellectual and the moral growth of the youth of the church should be confronting them with the force of the Biblical proclamation that the fields are indeed white for the harvest but the laborers are few. Christian enterprises of all sorts are begging for workers and if not we, who I ask will be the recruiting agents of the Lord of the harvest?

But when it comes to steering the youth into teaching, we teachers in the schools, on all levels, occupy a strategic position. I think that if you were to put the question to us teachers individually and ask each in turn, "How did it come about that you went into teaching?" you might be surprised in how many instances our entry into the profession came about through having been inspired to emulate a certain teacher.

Consider the various potentials here that lie within our control to so large a degree. Everybody loves to talk and to explain something to somebody else. I speak as a fool, could it be this that accounts for our ranks being made up mostly of women? At an early age and in the lower grades you will find children in their free time playing school. And how they vie with each other for the honor and presumably the fun of being the teacher. Ten years later nobody wants to be teacher What has happened in these years? Who and what knocked that ideal ou of their heads? Could it be that they have come to sense that we teachers don't get much fun out of what we are doing? Enthusiasm is contagious, bu so is defeatism, dullness and apathy Youngsters will forgive much in thei teachers, but the unpardonable sin i the profession is being a grouch, a sourpuss. How do you expect young people to take up a line of work whe too many of its practitioners ar crabbed, thwarted and unattractive per sonalities? And with our endless com plaints about low pay and overwork w do a very effective job of sending ou charges on into other lines of endeavo You may talk all you wish about king dom work, about the glorious challeng of teaching the covenant youth, bu what we ourselves as teachers are speak louder than all our urgings.

What contrast there is between thos teachers who have obvious competenc and enthusiasm for their work, a friend ly warmth, an evidence of sympatheti understanding and the bearing of cultivated and mature person, and thos who day after day dully and routinel transmit knowledge, as if, in their dis cipline, they were the fountain-head an the students the empty heads, or thos who make a simple subject seem diff cult the more to impress their youn friends, or those who respond wit contempt, cynicism, or rebuke to "th stupid question" or ridicule the studen who has chanced to forget "the obviou answer" that everyone should know.

Most teachers today are underpai and overworked and the same is tru of many of our ministers. It is th solemn duty of the Christian communit which supports the schools and th churches to make a re-appraisal — an it ought to be an agonizing one — o the total resources at its disposal in a effort to meet these deficiences. Bu it is the special obligation of us teach ers to demonstrate in the daily pe formance of our work the inherentl desirable features of the art of teach ing. Too often we tacitly assume tha our best students will, of course, tur to more lucrative employment. Youn people are very quick to sense our ow

estimate of the low esteem in which we hold our work. We sell ourselves short and then are surprised when no one buys. By being good teachers and by admitting to ourselves and believing whole heartedly in the essential goodness of our calling we can do much to combat in ourselves this occupational disease of frustration and defeatism. Then and only then will those under our instruction catch fire.

"Nobody," wrote the late Rufus Jones, "knows how the kindling flame of life and power leaps from one life to another. What is the magic quality in a person which instantly awakens faith? You listen to a hundred persons unmoved and unchanged; you hear a few quiet words from the man with the kindling torch and you suddenly discover what life means for you forever more, and you become forthwith another man, carrying perhaps your own torch."

I SHOULDN'T draw this subject out further, but before leaving it, let me ask one or two more questions. How do we as parents speak of the teachers of our children? Do those of us who are successful business and professional people urge our children to become Christian school teachers? Or is the total impact of the influence of our homes such that despite our pious prattle we cherish for ourselves and for our children essentially worldly ideals? The shortage of teachers in our schools reflects, as I see it, what we ourselves are. It is a sort of commentary, not so much on our young people, as on us who are middle age and older. What future is there, humanly speaking, for the Christian school movement if within its own bosom we do not have the spiritual, the moral and the intellectual resources for the renewal and the increase of the instructional staffs?

And so like most of our troubles, our teacher shortage is, at bottom, a religious question. So is our failure to pay adequate salaries. They are the two sides of one and the same coin and are symptomatic of the progressive debasement of the gold of our Christian heritage. If we can only get teachers by raising salaries and if we only raise salaries because of competition with the public schools, if, in brief, the only logic that operates among us are the naturalistic economic laws of American society as a whole, then, I say, our future is not bright. This was not the spirit that founded these schools, this was not the spirit of your parents and of mine. The continuation of our Christian schools, and they can't continue without teachers, is a challenge to our definition of Christianity itself. We have taken our stand with the purest and with the highest and with the finest tradition, as we believe, of Western Christendom, nay with Scripture itself which teaches us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. God forbid that the time should ever come when we change the definition to adjust to our failure!

* * *

IT IS time that, in conclusion, I talk a bit about Calvin College. Many things that I have been saying about the Christian schools are equally applicable to Calvin. And so I can be brief.

Administratively the structure of Calvin College differs from that of our Christian schools. The differing structures are thought of by some to be antithetical: the free parent-controlled school versus the ecclesiastically managed school. However, this organizational difference involves, and I speak only for myself, no basic Scriptural teaching. It so happens that the weight of history is nearly all on the side of ecclesiastical control over Christian education. And as a matter of fact, is parent control as we know it actually free from the church, and does anyone want it to be free? No doubt the Christian school is the backbone of our church, but I ask you in all fairness, how long would our schools continue to operate without the financial, the moral and the spiritual support of our churches? If by parent control you mean that you don't want the dominies to run the school, that is understandable. But if the same man in the pulpit is not wholeheartedly for Christian schools the cause suffers grievously.

I raise this question of parent control versus church control because it seems to me that this issue is going to play a large role in the growing demand among us for Junior colleges. Should the church or should independent societies operate Junior colleges? It certainly is not an easy question to resolve. Yet, important as it is, it should be kept in its proper place. Whether the one or the other pattern comes to dominate is not the real issue and it should not obscure the fundamental identity of aim of both the Christian schools and of Calvin College. What is at stake in the world today is the role that God is to have in the education of our youth. And here we at Calvin and you in the Christian schools are at one.

Our people are rightly concerned about Calvin College; as goes it so go we all. When you hear good things about Calvin you rejoice; if it be evil tidings that come to your ears you are saddened. I need not tell you that we are not as bad as our worst detractors make out, and I must tell myself that we are not as good as we at times think we are. To be sure, we at Calvin are heir to most of the troubles of the Christian Reformed Church and all the defects and shortcomings of the Christian schools pile up on the Calvin campus. I do not cite this as an excuse for our frequent failures, though it might be expected to moderate the severity of criticism. A better point of view for all of us would be a clearer realization that the course of education from kindergarten all the way through college is really all of a piece, and that if any part of this long stretch of sixteen or seventeen years of schooling is to achieve the objective implicit in its fundamental standards, all shall have to make equal progress towards the goal. The chain of education is never any better than its weakest link. Your problems are ours and ours are yours. In the students that come to us we are working with your product, be they good, fair or poor. In the teachers that we send into your schools you are working with our product, again be they good, fair or poor.

Speaking of the quality of students that come to us I cannot refrain from telling you the delightful story attributed to the late Irwin Edman. A few years ago there was a mutiny at Dartmoor Prison in England. The Chairman of the Royal Commission was not a man to study conditions at second hand. He went down to the prison itself and interviewed, among others, one of the oldest inmates in the institution, one who had not been involved in the uprising. "What brought about this mutiny?" he asked, "Quite frankly, what? The food, the discipline, what?" "Well sir, "replied the old fellow quite politely, "I have been a member of this prison man and boy for forty years. I think, sir, I may properly claim to call

Christian Education: The Present — Continued

this place my home. Now some says one thing, sir, and some says another, but," he said lowering his voice, "it's my belief, sir, we're not getting the stamp of man in 'ere we used to."

* * *

THIS leads us quite naturally to our final thought — a question now being asked in Christian school circles. Does our prospective teacher actually need four years of college and an A.B. degree, or are not two years of college quite adequate, especially for the lower elementary grades? Scarcity of teachers will, of course, leave school boards often with no choice but to take whomever they can get. I am deeply appreciative of the difficulty they face. We too at Calvin are obliged at times to add to the staff, teachers who at the time of their appointment are not really qualified for the job. That is a serious situation both for the Christian schools and for Calvin. But far more serious is the point of view that holds that two years of college is good enough for the grades and that a larger investment in preparation isn't really necessary. It is one thing to be obliged to carry on with defective training; it is quite another thing to acquiesce in it.

If what I have tried to clarify is true, as regards the history of Christian education, the strategic role which it must play in working out a Christian view of the relation of religion to culture, and the indispensable need of that Christian education to preserve our Reformed churches, then the full potential of what we have to offer at Calvin is a minimum and not a maximum higher education. We at Calvin are deeply conscious of how imperfectly we understand our own mission, so large a part of which is concerned with the training of future teachers, and I shall be the first to confess that we have this treasure in earthen vessels. And a precious treasure it truly is and we propose with every resource at our command to cultivate it to our mutual benefit and to the greater glory of that Incarnate Wisdom of God, whose we are and whom we serve.

The Christian and the Boy Scouts of America

by M. EUGENE OSTERHAVEN*

AN AREA of Christian faith and life which today presents problems to many minds and which has received insufficient treatment is that which concerns the relation of the Christian to society. There are those, of course, whose understanding of Christianity is so broad, and shallow, that for them no problem exists. And there are others, often self-styled "Bible-believing Christians", who solve it by simple recitation of 2 Corinthians 6:14ff. where the Apostle has something to say about being unequally yoked together with unbelievers. Neither of these attitudes is satisfying to still other, more thoughtful, believers, however, who find themselves constantly faced with the problem of their relation to the world in which they carry on their business, their professional schooling, or community and civic interests and associations. I would like briefly to raise the problem in this article and relate it specifically to the question of whether it is proper for a Christian to be engaged in the program of the Boy Scouts of America. I use the organization of the Boy Scouts partly to make concrete in a given instance the problem before us and partly because of my interest in and association with Scouting. I desire to make clear from the outset that my fundamental concern is the Church of Christ and that I trust that my interest in Scouting is in no way competitive with that loyalty and claim upon my life.

The question of Scouting, or the 4-H Club, for that matter, is not only of academic interest. When one's son announces at the dinner table that he wants to become a Boy Scout there is a situation of "existential" and not merely intellectual concern! Before he gives his answer the parent must consider a number of prior questions among which are the character of the Boy Scout organization and the relation of the Christian to "neutral" organizations of this type.

* * *

CONSIDERING the above questions in inverse order we find that the first is suggestive of others. Reflection on the relation of the Christion to neutral organizations leads to consideration of that activity outside the Church in which he *may* legitimately and conscientiously engage as a Christian. And there are situations in life where the question presents itself personally with moral compulsion so that the form it assumes is: In what *ought* I to engage as a Christian? These both throw us back to the basic consideration with which we opened this discussion, that of the relation of the Christian to society.

The answers that have been given to this inquiry have had diverse classifications but for our purposes we can say that they are three in number. There is a fourth answer which denies or minimizes the distinction between Church and world but since that conception can hardly be called Christian it need not occupy our attention here.

First, the attitude of some Christians towards the world, or society at large, has been a negative one. Rightly recognizing the antithesis between Church and a lost world these folk have believed in the desirability of Christian isolation of themselves from the rest of society as far as is possible or practicable. They have shunned active participation in community or civic life when they have lived among non-Christians. Fellowship and cooperation with unbelievers, and frequently with other Christians outside their own circle, in "clubs" or other forms of social enterprise was out of the question even though they lived among them. For that reason the tendency of people of this mind has

*Dr. Osterhaven is Professor of Systemttic Theology in Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan.

been to gravitate to separate community existence.

The reaction of other Christians to their social environment can be characterized as one of toleration. With clear understanding of the distinction between Church and world these folk may have felt the difficulty of the problem and despaired answering it, their present attitude representing a compromise which seemed to them to be the best working relationship. They did not flee from the world about them but sought to get along with it as well as they could, participating in societal affairs when necessary but on the whole adopting a quietist attitude towards society outside the Church.

There have been other Christians, however, who have not been satisfied with either of the above positions. Recognizing the reality of evil in all its fearsomeness, they have believed in an infinitely greater Lord, the consequences of whose redemption reach far into society and culture. That Christ, once despised but now sovereign Lord, came to renew human nature and to transform society by his grace. His followers are not called to flee from the world, nor to tolerate it merely, but they are called by him to conquer it in his name and for his sake. He calls them "the salt of the earth", "the light of the world", his "witnesses" whom he sends out into the world just as the Father sent him into the world. They art not to consider evil lightly but are to relate it to the Prince of Darkness whence it came. However, they are to wage battle against him (the devil) and it (evil) in society and they are to do so *in* this world, not *out* of it. How could it be otherwise since man is a part of society? Professor H. Richard Niebuhr has well written, in an interpretation of Augustine and Calvin, that Christ transforms man "in his culture and society, not apart from these, for there is no nature without culture and no turning of men from self and idols to God save in society" (*Christ and Culture*, p. 43;cf. p. 206ff.). The gospel is a leaven which is to permeate all of life, God calls each Christian to serve in some capacity in society and each is, in his work and in his play, to manifest the blessedness of a life of faith and love and glorify God thereby.

All *Journal* readers recognize in this the social ethic of Calvin which has been treated often by students of his thought. Calvin's comprehensive view of redemption, including his teaching about the restoration of this world and the resurrection of our bodies; his conception of theocracy whereby Church and State are united to produce a more perfect society, indeed a Christian civilization, and that the State as well as the Church is responsible for the improvement of society morally and spiritually; his emphasis that all that God gives us in this world is to be used with thanksgiving to his glory and that nothing, save sin, need be excepted; and, above all, his constant emphasis on the divine sovereignty — these are the ingredients of a dynamic view which has transformed society at specific epochs in history and which deserves greater attention by our Reformed Community in our day.

I say that conception deserves greater attention by our Reformed community today because it has been forgotten by some who cherish the name "Reformed" and pride themselves in being "Calvinists". The tendency of persons in Reformed Churches to dissociate politics, e.g., or business, education, or other areas of social concern from the gospel may be acceptable in certain forms of Christianity but it is hardly good Calvinism. For the latter has been noted historically for its sweep of interest and repudiation of an exclusive soteriological interest. A preoccupation with our own homes, schools and churches so that we have little concern and no love for those outside our own circle may save us from considerable agony of spirit but is poor Christianity and the exact opposite of *Reformed* Christianity with its famed social concern, magnanimity and responsibility. Or again, when one lifts the doctrine of the antithesis between the regenerate and unregenerate world out of its total Biblical setting and exaggerates it at the expense of other Scriptural emphases which are not even mentioned, it may be possible to argue that the Christian, especially one holding ecclesiastical office, should not become involved in community political or moral issues, or that one need have no responsibility for public institutions of learning, but he should not seek to do so in the name of Reformed Christianity which repudiates cheap escapes from social concern and takes the problems of society seriously.

John Calvin, the early Reformed fathers, and those who have their spirit today preach and practice an aggressive penetration of society in the name of Christ. Indeed they believe that it is Christ himself who calls them thereto and by his Spirit blesses their efforts so that society itself can be reformed. The avenues of social intercourse become means of grace in the lives of persons dedicated to Christ and called to live as "monks-in-the-world". Such aggressive penetration of society is impossible, however, if Christians isolate themselves from their fellows and confine their social endeavor to their own Christian fellowship. Leaven is effective only when placed in the lump; Christians are not enemies of society, as they were once accused of being, but, under God, its only hope and their place is in society where their beneficent influence can be felt.

* * *

IF THE ABOVE argument is granted, that Christians have a responsibility to penetrate and transform society, not only by a formal proclamation of the means of social contact, the next question is what specific means should be used for such penetration. To generalize is good and necessary but there comes a time when one must be specific and convert principles into action. This often becomes difficult, especially when one's principles have been held only in the bottom of his heart where they should be so that they are an "existential" concern to him.

How is the Calvinist going to make his influence felt in society? This is a vital question for many of us who are tempted to limit our contacts to our own rather homogeneous group, *our* homes, *our* churches and *our* schools which can so easily absorb all of our interest and energy. I speak of thus limiting ourselves as a temptation because being with "our own kind" is so cozy and comfortable. To make an impact on the broader areas of social concourse is often difficult, sometimes disagreeable, and it may be dangerous. But Reformed Christianity was not wrought out by persons fearful of social contact or strenuous living and is not well adapted to them now. How then, I repeat, are we going to penetrate society at large and break out of that circle of church — home — school which becomes a kind of "Maginot Line" to some people beyond which they dare not venture,

for such has become their social conditioning?

Although one might well begin a discussion of politics, education, or any one of a number of other topics at this point, I desire to discuss a movement of which I have been a part for many years and which has come up for discussion recently. I do so because I believe that here is a program in which the Christian man has excellent opportunities to influence the lives of boys and thus make a contribution to society as a Christian. It is only the man who has worked with boys in such a program — in its learning of skills and specialized merit badge studies, its handicraft, first-aid and physical development, its camping and nature lore — who is aware of the tremendous possibilities there are to mold character during the impressionable years of boyhood and youth when a boy's natural instincts give him the urge to learn and to do the very things that Scouting offers him.

The Boy Scouts of America is a corporation "to promote through organization and cooperation with other agencies the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance and kindred virtues" (*Constitution*). It is not a basic institution like the home, the church or the school. Nor does it in any way supplant them or contravene their influence or teaching. "It is a movement with a program for boys, which it makes available to the basic institutions and related agencies to use in achieving their own objectives in the character formation of youth. In keeping with its character as a movement, the Boy Scouts of America does not operate a single Boy Scout Unit." (*The Scouting Program in Protestant Churches*). The sponsoring agency, the largest single type of which is the Church, operates its own unit, some fifty thousand such units being in the churches in this country, picks all its own leaders, administers its own program and is in full control of its activities. When the sponsoring organization is a church it decides whether its unit will be a Closed Unit, limited to boys affiliated with the congregation, or an Open Unit, accepting outsiders. In the former the unit can easily be integrated into the educational program of the church; in the latter there are opportunities for missionary outreach. In either type the sponsoring church is in full control and the minister is encouraged to serve as chaplain. Scouting seeks to supplement the program offered by the basic institutions mentioned above, church, home, school, and willingly subordinates itself to them. It offers, e.g., the church its camping facilities and program, and the church which sponsors a unit may use the camps — valued at more than $37,000,000.00 over the country — for its own Scout unit(s) under its own leadership. Thus camping becomes a projection of the church's program for boys.

* * *

Such then being the Boy Scout program what are the objections to the Christian's participation in it?

1. One objection offered is that it is a "neutral" organization and that therefore the Christian should not participate. This stricture fails to recognize that there is a large area of common social concern in which the Christian may legitimately engage. Business is "neutral". Service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, Exchange, Optimist, Lions, etc.), large labor unions, the 4-H Club, the YMCA, political parties, the Red Cross and Community Chest, are all neutral organizations, but most of us participate in them. The argument then loses its validity against the Boy Scouts. Moreover, the latter is not neutral in the way in which these other organizations are inasmuch as it is controlled by sponsoring units which supply the religious emphasis. The National Council, B.S.A., has declared: "Scouting recognizes the essential part religion must play in character building; but Scouting feels that to attempt to provide in its own name this religious training of youth would be most highly presumptuous and an intrusion into the field of the Church."

2. Some aver that Scouting has a religion and that its religion is modernistic. This charge comes from Scouting's use of the name "God" and its strong emphasis on moral virtues. The reply to this is that Scouting is not a religious movement in the full sense of the word. It *is* religious in that it requires belief in God and claims that truth, purity and other virtues are absolute. But the usual sense in which the word religion is used is of this or that particular religion, and Scouting is not a religion of this nature and cannot be construed as being so. It turns that responsibility over to the sponsoring unit.

In this connection I wish to quote from the Rev. Dr. A. E. Iverson, National Director of Protestant Relations, B.S.A., and a Lutheran Pastor, who wrote the undersigned in a discussion of this very point:

> "If the mere fact that we use the words "God", "religion", "church", "mortality", "spiritual values", etc., proves that the Boy Scouts of America thereby is posing as a religion the same charges should be leveled against many voluntary organizations and associations which have pledged their allegiance to God and their loyalty to the church in their basic documents. What a tragedy it would be if all non-church movements and associations were forced to remove all reference to God and religion from its literature for fear that theologians would charge them with being "a religion." This would be a great stride towards a secularization of our society and the isolation of religion to its organized forms."

One of Scouting's highest awards is the *God and Country Award*, earned by Protestant Scouts who participate in church activities and study Scripture and creed solely under the direction of their own pastors. In every advancement in the Boy Scout program the boy must have sought to be true to the moral ideals of Scouting, but in many, if not most, Councils, across America, as here in Western Michigan, a Scout cannot become an Eagle Scout, the highest rank, without proof from his pastor that he has been faithful in his religious duties.

3. There has been objection to the Scout oath, but it is not an oath in the religious sense and it is expressly called "the Scout Oath or Promise."

4. Some have charged that the emphasis on the "good turn" and moral living contravenes the doctrine of justification by faith alone. By the same argument one might suppose that there should never be a public appeal to morality outside the church. The answer is that moralism is always a dan

ger but proper religious instruction by the sponsoring organization can obviate this danger.

5. There is a possibility that leadership and/or boys in some community might be undesirable. True; I would not want my boys to be in units of certain other religious bodies.

6. There is a possibility, say some, that Scouts engage in activities with other boys which compromise their own convictions. This objection usually refers to Sunday camp activities and services. Although Sunday at the Scout camps with which I have been acquainted has been different from week days in that the regular daily schedule gives way to a "Sunday Schedule", there is still the possibility, because of the vast difference of opinion on proper activities for Sunday, of a boy doing something at camp that he ought not to do. He will not be required to, however. Every camp director is aware of the possibilities of criticism at this point and is instructed to be scrupulously careful. Moreover, the handbooks for leaders stress the same point repeatedly. When a church troop goes to a camp as a unit, as most do, its leaders will see that their boys conduct themselves properly on Sunday.

Boys need not attend camp services if they or their leaders prefer another alternative. This past summer services at the two camps maintained by the Grand Valley Council (seven counties around Grand Rapids) were conducted by the full-time chaplains, students at Western Seminary (Holland), who were in charge of the total camp religious program.

7. A final objection to Scouting, at times a silent one, is that Scouting weakens the separation of God's people from the world. The answer to this, the crux of the matter with many people, is that it is possible to keep one's boys separate to a large degree in Scouting when a sponsoring unit desires it. The Closed Unit (supra) is the type used in some churches; and at summer camp units can have camp sites all to themselves — that is the way our summer camps are set up — and can even have their own church services at camp or in a city church, their own evening vespers and any other activities they desire. This objection then falls to the ground. A further word here, however, may not be out of place. There is a Biblical separation that is necessary for God's people. We must have no "communion with darkness" and "touch not the unclean thing." Biblical separation is separation from sin, not separation for its own sake. Whereas the former is necessary when one is faithful to his Lord, the latter is schismatic and often stems from pride and lack of charity. Separation from a movement that is evil is good and necessary. Inasmuch as Scouting is not such a movement in itself, refusal to participate in the program because of the necessity of separation makes one wonder just what kind of separation the objector has in mind.

* * *

IN CONCLUSION, I believe that the problem of the relation of our Reformed churches to Scouting points up the fundamental problem which we treated in the first part of this paper. It is the problem of the Christian's relation to society and, specifically, it is the problem of our Christian people to the American society in which they are placed. In other words, it is the old problem of Americanization which has long been with us and which is becoming acute in recent years. Scouting, like some other things, has been prejudged as not being for us because it was a part of the American world about us, a world in which we did not feel quite at home, and which we felt to be dominated by the liberal American Church, where there was any religious domination at all.

It is this isolation of ourselves from the society and culture in which God has placed us which we must overcome. We must overcome it so that the active Kiwanian or Rotarian in our midst is not, for that reason, suspected of being "worldly," so that the Calvinist who has the courage to enter the arena of politics is not penalized by his religious colleagues for a supposed compromise of religious conviction, and so that the wholesome movement called Scouting is not declared out-of-bounds for our boys. The greater reason for our participation in these and/or other forms of broad social activity, however, is that God calls us thus to serve him. Not a withdrawal into our own little sanctified corner, but an aggressive penetration of society in Christ's name and in that strength which he supplies us: *that is Calvinism.*

Need For a University: What Is It We Need?

by W. HARRY JELLEMA

"IT IS TRUE," I hear someone saying, "that for fifty years some Calvinists have talked university. They haven't got anywhere. And I don't think they ever will.

"In the first place, the thing is too big. Apparently these enthusiasts have never sat down to figure the cost. Take just medicine alone, for example, or graduate work in chemistry; consider only the cost of duplicating the university laboratories in these fields! The outlay required would be prohibitive.

"And if from your institution you omit medicine and dentistry and law and physics and astronomy and chemistry and geology and biology because the expense would run into millions, what is left? you can at most hope to offer graduate degrees in a few of the social sciences, in some of the humanities, and in theology. But even if you could offer work of respectable grade in these few fields, your institution would not be a university. And students in fields you omit would still have to go elsewhere.

"Besides, it is questionable whether we need a university. It may well be a good idea for students to go elsewhere for their advanced training, and if our system of Christian education all the way through college means anything, those who graduate from it should be ready to stand on their own feet."

* * *

THAT, in substance, represents a kind of argument one frequently hears. What to say of it?

Shall one say "Obviously whoever so argues betrays that Reformed principles mean little to him"?

Need for a University — Continued

I do not believe such a conclusion at all obvious. It may be true, but it need not be. For *if* a Calvinistic university must from the beginning duplicate the offerings of, for example, our mid-Western state universities, then the cost is indeed utterly prohibitive. Again, *if* an institution that does not offer professional and graduate training in all fields is not a university, then any "university" we could hope to establish would not really be a university. Likewise, *if* we can't expect to do work of respectable scholarly grade, then our "Calvin University" would be a pious fraud, and its establishment would not be Calvinistic but unCalvinistic. And *if* our university were to mean mere inbreeding, students would from the standpoint of graduate scholarship be better off going elsewhere. . .

In short, *if* this is what advocates of a Calvin University mean by university, *if* they think of it simply as top rung in the educational ladder, then the argument of the objector may not be more than half right; it may also be quite consonant with Calvinistic integrity.

At issue is not necessarily presence or absence of Reformed convictions as such, but the primary definition of university. And both a Calvinist who enthusiastically endorses the idea of university and one who argues against it may have the same mistaken notion of university.

* * *

A UNIVERSITY exists first of all for the sake of "science", for the sake of scholarly research, for the advance and interpretation of knowledge. And a Calvinistic university presupposes our belief that as Calvinists we have something of significance to contribute to the advance and interpretation of knowledge. Only secondarily does a university exist for the sake of students. As Abraham Kuyper put it more than a half century ago,

"A university is no training-school. If I may be permitted the metaphor, a university does indeed also maintain a store for selling its wares, but its principal business is to be a factory; a factory, that is to say, of science.

Admittedly, the term university is confusing. And that we may keep in mind its primary purpose, to promote scholarly research and production, perhaps we do well to speak of it as an Institute for Advanced Studies or as an Institute for Calvinistic Research. For this is to express the essence of a university.

AS A first practical step, then, I suggest that we organize and incorporate a *Calvin Institute for Advanced Studies.*

Once established, such an Institute could also ensure proper standards for graduate instruction when and if such instruction were possible and would fulfill a need. In other words, a "teaching university" as small or large as circumstances permitted could also grow out of the Institute.

But wholly apart from whether demand for graduate degrees existed, such on Institute for Advanced Studies is needed. We need it for Christian education all the way up the ladder. In Kuyper's metaphor, if we are to maintain stores we need a factory. Indeed, once we organized the Christian elementary school, the next step, theoretically, should have been the establishing of such an Institute. Instead, we assumed we knew what Christian education meant; and in terms of broad generalizations we did; enough to make a beginning. But the movement has been signally blessed; we are far beyond beginnings; and an Institute is only the more imperative. And an Institute is needed denominationally. The kind of questions that frequently come up at our synodical meetings or are discussed in our papers, for example, involve issues on which we ought to have scholarly monagraphs to serve as background or basis for study and recommendation; views of a committee appointed ad hoc or of men writing under the limitations of popular exposition are not caluculated to be sufficient. Indeed, all in all, the one thing that, humanly speaking, has till now kept us as denomination from descent into utter mediocrita is the existence and vigor o Reformed scholarship in The Nether lands together with the unorganized effort of individuals among ourselves whose productivity has usually beer hampered by the fact that clamorous primary duties lay elsewhere. And al though intending no ample presenta tion of our need for an Institute, I must not omit mention of the fact tha we need it if, behind a facade of Cal vinism, we are not unconsciously and increasingly to succumb to un-Calvin istic trends and pressures in our en vironment.

Now, much more even than fifty years ago, we need an Institute of Ad vanced Studies.

* * *

My second practical proposal is tha such an Institute should from the very beginning be distinct from Calvin Col lege and Seminary; legally and actual ly distinct.

And this seems to me a matter o course. A college exists primarily fo teaching. It is true that a teache should always be something of a scholar, and a college teacher ough certainly to be. Effective colleg teaching demands, for instance, first hand acquaintance with and disci plined ability to interpret sources, an ability then to organize a "course" in a given subject. But the scholarly activ ity is for the sake of teaching; and es sentially a college exists in order t offer students a liberal education Similarly, our Seminary has a distinc function and program: its primar purpose has been and is to furnish ministers of the gospel, and to this pur pose its program corresponds. In a Institute of Advanced Studies, on th contrary, a man's first obligation is t advance and promote knowledge, t work with the sources, to interpret an re-apply, to express and discuss wit fellow scholars the results of his ac tivity, to furnish the materials wit which the teacher works. And unles the Institute is distinct it will be as similated to College and Seminary an neither these nor it will profit. C course an individual who is a Colleg or Seminary professor might also be working member of the staff of the In stitute, but he is not necessarily the on because he is the other. The Institut of Advanced Studies should be a di tinct corporation.

*A. Kuyper, *Band aan het Woord*, Rede te Middelburg, 28, Juni, 1899. In the original: "Een Universiteit is geen Opleidingsschool. Ze heeft, om het eens zeer plat uit te drukken, óók wel een winkel, maar hoofdzaak is voor de Universiteit de fabriek, wel te verstaan, de fabriek der wetenschap.").

A THIRD practical proposal is, think, so obvious that it requires ittle discussion. Such an Institute of Advanced Studies should not be an ecclesiastical matter. It should not be run by Synod or by an ecclesiastically appointed Board. And this for various reasons. I mention only one, and a sufficient reason. Our ecclesiastical polity and practice being what it is, (and not Roman Catholic, for example), no such Institute could flourish under church control.

* * *

Do we need a university? In the proper sense of university, in the sense of an Institute of Advanced Studies, I think we need it at once; more than we need some other things we contemplate. Such an Institute should be distinct from College and Seminary and should not be ecclesiastically controlled.

But can we then afford it? How would it be financed? And what about its organization and administration?

Such more immediately practical questions are wholly proper, and we should have some idea, surely, that they can be satisfactorily answered.

By way of answer, I have some suggestions to make in a concluding article.

LETTERS TO THE JOURNAL

A Call for Discussion

The Editors
The Reformed Journal

Sirs:

Would you allow me space to make some observations prompted by the response to an article recently published in this *Journal?*

A lively discussion of significant issues is profitable to contributors and readers alike. For the fruit of discussion is enlightenment, and the harvest of enlightenment is enhanced apprehension of truth. Therein lies the claim discussion has upon the reader's time and attention.

Discussion provides enlightenment because it consists in the patient and persistent effort to draw out what truth there may be in either 'side' and to free it from distortion.

Unfortunately, *discussion* ever tends to degenerate into *argument.* It does so when a critic misses the central thrust of a piece and therefore hurries his readers down the labyrinthine lanes of misunderstanding. It does so when, consciously or otherwise, the critic draws bead on the writer as well as, or in preference to, his idea. Indeed, essentially the generic spirit of all argument is *ad hominem*: the demonstration that 'my truth,' 'my wit,' 'my dexterity' are superior to yours.

Therefore those who take opposite sides in argument are called *opponents;* in discussion they are called *participants.* Therefore a 'winning' strategy in argument, already popular when Demosthenes employed it to drive Aeschines from Athens, is seemingly to oblige an opponent to inferences and conclusions he neither intends nor accepts. The tactics of argument rest, basically, on four techniques: to find weaknesses or to make them, to belittle strengths or to obscure them. Contrariwise, the 'winning' strategy in discussion — *winning* of enlightenment, that is, for all concerned — rests on four other techniques: the accounting for weaknesses, and their removal; the accentuation of strengths, and their development.

In brief, discussion is the rhetorical embodiment of the passion to unity in which love and logic meet; while argument is the rhetorical expression of the passion to self-assertion from which disunity and division arise.

While, no doubt, readers will differ as to when discussion crosses the border into argument, an interesting illustration of this tendency has been furnished us, it seems to me, in the response in this *Journal* and elsewhere evoked by Dr. Harry Boer's "Here Is Thy Pound."

Dr. Boer's initial contribution was, I thought, clear enough. His thesis was that neither the *practice* nor the *precept* of the New Testament Church gives us license to 'maintain' the 'quality' of the Christian Reformed Church by making "the *already* sanctified life and the *already* instructed mind a condition for membership." The replies of his critics view with alarm the 'relaxation' of standards, draw grave inferences regarding the creeds, dissect the notion of quality, or even express the hope that Dr. Boer will change his mind. But whatever significance these contentions intrinsically possess, they hardly enlighten the reader regarding the central issue raised by Dr. Boer. In short, what might have been fruitful *discussion* is blighted by fruitless *argument.*

Moreover, argument, however well intentioned, is not only fruitless. Nor does it only tend to provoke equally fruitless counter-argument. It also stultifies further discussion. No wind of the spirit blows freely through a wood blighted by the dry rot of argument. The writer with a thesis to propound seeks to anticipate and to forestall *argumentative* replies; he commits no sentence — indeed, no word — to the printer until it has been viewed from every conceivable perspective, and twisted and tortured in vain hope that no critic will, inadvertantly or otherwise, turn it into 'virtually' something else. He seeks, that is, to move forward with his eye fixed over his shoulder; and his progress, if he makes any, is slow and erratic.

The new, the different, the original is especially vulnerable to argumentative criticism; and in the effort to make it less so, vision is blurred, inspiration cools before reaching the mold of print, and finally silence becomes alluring because it is safe. Truth becomes professional, harking backward; and journalistic instruction becomes indoctrination — the giving of answers to those who have neither formulated nor understood the questions.

And thus it comes about that, as has been observed in this *Journal* before, when an able historian writes concerning the impact of Calvinistic scholarship on contemporary America, he can hardly discover that we have had anything creative to say. Some of Dr. Boer's experience with "Here Is Thy Pound" aptly illustrates one reason why this is so.

Respectfully,
Lester De Koster

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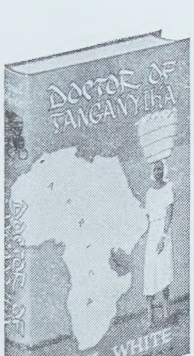

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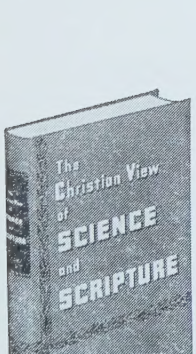

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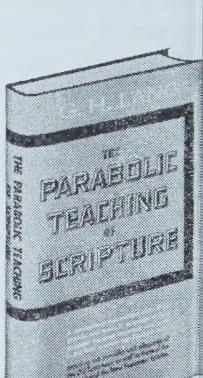

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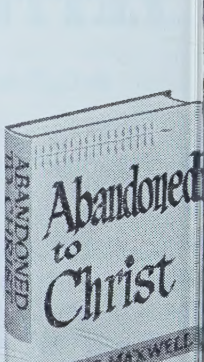

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